

NCHS Data on Overweight and Obesity

About NCHS

The CDC's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) is the nation's principal health statistics agency, providing data to identify and address health issues. NCHS compiles statistical information to help guide public health and health policy decisions.

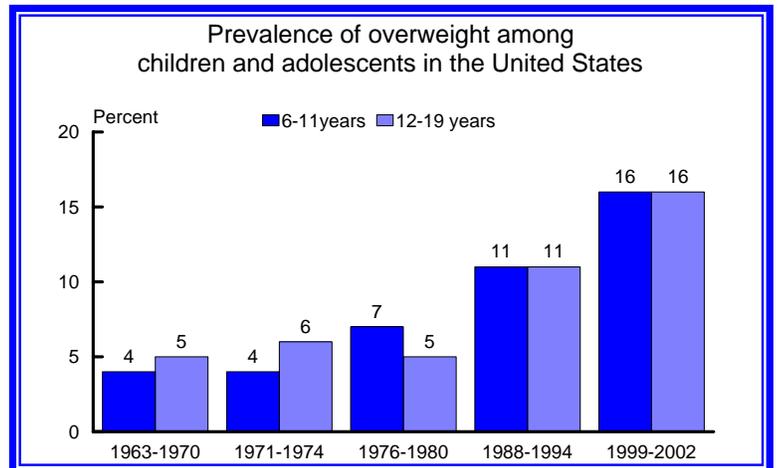
Collaborating with other public and private health partners, NCHS employs a variety of data collection mechanisms to obtain accurate information from multiple sources. This process provides a broad perspective to help us understand the population's health, influences on health, and health outcomes.

Overview

The prevalence of overweight and obesity continues to be an important public health issue in the United States. The primary data source for monitoring the national prevalence of overweight and obesity is NCHS' National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). This survey obtains measured (as opposed to self-reported) data on height and weight.

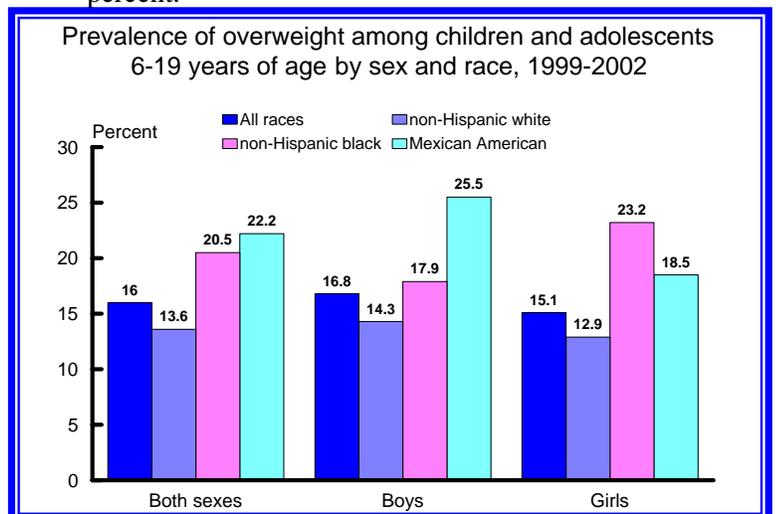
NCHS Data on Overweight Among Children

One of the national health objectives for 2010 is to reduce the prevalence of overweight among children aged 6-19 years from the NHANES III (1988-1994) baseline of 11 percent. While overweight among children and adolescents was relatively stable from the 1960s to 1980, overweight in youths has increased since 1980.



SOURCE: Ogden et al. JAMA 2002; Hedley et al. JAMA 2004.

- From 1963-1970 to 1999-2002, the prevalence of overweight among children ages 6-11 years quadrupled, from approximately 4 percent to 16 percent.
- During the same time period, the prevalence among adolescents aged 12-19 years increased more than three-fold from approximately 5 percent to 16 percent.



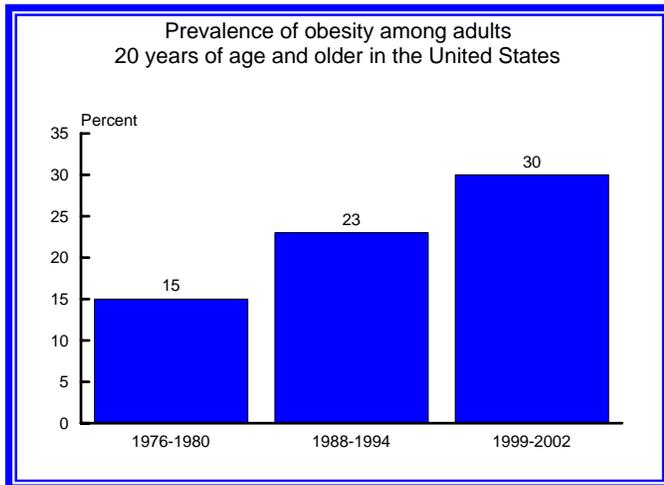
Source: Hedley et al. JAMA 2004.

The NHANES results indicate continuing disparities in the prevalence of overweight among children aged 6-19 years by racial/ethnic group.

- Among boys, the prevalence of overweight was significantly higher among Mexican Americans (25.5 percent), than non-Hispanic blacks (17.9 percent) or non-Hispanic whites (14.3 percent).
- Among girls, the prevalence of overweight was significantly lower among non-Hispanic whites (12.9 percent) than non-Hispanic blacks (23.2 percent) or Mexican Americans (18.5 percent).

NCHS Data on Obesity Among Adults

One of the national health objectives for 2010 is to reduce the prevalence of obesity among adults to 15 percent.



- NHANES data from 1976-1980 to 1999-2002 show the prevalence of obesity among adults increased from 15 percent to 30 percent.

Source: Flegal et al., JAMA 2002. Hedley et al., JAMA, 2004.

In 1999-2002 there were an average of 9.9 million annual visits to physician offices and hospital outpatient departments in the U.S. made by adults 18 years of age and over where a diagnosis of obesity was recorded. At approximately 23 percent of these visits, an antiobesity drug was prescribed; 75 percent of obese patients received either weight reduction or diet counseling, and only 43 percent received exercise counseling.

Overweight and Obesity Data Sources

National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) – collects information about the health and diet of people in the United States. NHANES is unique in that it combines a home interview with health tests that are conducted in a Mobile Examination Center. NHANES is able to directly measure conditions and to provide reliable information on health conditions regardless of whether the survey respondent is aware of them.

(<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes.htm>)

National Health Care Survey – a family of health care provider surveys, obtaining information about the facilities that supply health care, the services rendered, and the characteristics of the patients served. NHCS surveys hospitals, office-based physician practices, emergency and outpatient departments, ambulatory surgery centers, nursing homes, and home health and hospice agencies. These surveys provide a picture of how the delivery system works, and provide an opportunity to learn about patients, their illnesses, and treatments.